

Oral History Interview
with Stephen Joel Trachtenberg
December 31, 2008
Media and Public Affairs Building
by G. David Anderson, University Archivist and Historian
for the George Washington University Oral History Program

ANDERSON: It works perfectly for . . .

TRACHTENBERG: There are a lot of uses, garages.

ANDERSON: I imagine so. I mean, I know a lot of people who have bands.

TRACHTENBERG: Yeah. Yeah. They practice.

ANDERSON: They practice in garages. In fact, some bands, actually, that's where Gates actually started, was in his garage, with a friend, tinkering around with . . .and jobs, for that matter. [laughs]

TRACHTENBERG: Yes, I guess that's right.

ANDERSON: So. Anyway, again I appreciate your taking the time for these interviews, and we will probably kind of do a little wrap-up today, and you know, if we need to pursue anything or if there's something that you specifically want to address, I'm going to be available, you know, for months

TRACHTENBERG: Good, good.

ANDERSON: And what we'll also do as I mentioned before is to, I will contact Francine some time in the new year, some time in January and we'll just set up a time and date.

TRACHTENBERG: Great, great.

ANDERSON: So . . .

TRACHTENBERG: You'll come by the house and we'll make a pot of coffee.

ANDERSON: That'd be great. I'd love to see your new home.

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TRACHTENBERG: Yeah. I'm sure she'd love to show it to you.

ANDERSON: So . . . She's told me a little bit about it a few months ago. Anyway, this is interview nine actually . . .

TRACHTENBERG: Wow

ANDERSON: [laughs] with President Emeritus Stephen Joel Trachtenberg. The interview is taking place in his office in the Media and Public Affairs building on the campus of the George Washington University. It is December the 31st. It is Blanche and ours anniversary, actually.

TRACHTENBERG: A happy new year to you to both of you and congratulations. That's wonderful. How long are you married?

ANDERSON: Twenty-two years.

TRACHTENBERG: Wow. Wow. Wow. Time flies when you're having fun.

ANDERSON: I figured I'd never forget if I did it on the 31st of December.

TRACHTENBERG: That's true. That's true.

ANDERSON: What I'd like to do today is a little bit different. Rather than, after reviewing the initial book that you wrote, which was an oral interview, and then comparing that with the things that we've asked, and we've covered, obviously covered ground on this interview that wasn't covered.

TRACHTENBERG: That was the idea, yeh.

ANDERSON: And although there's obviously some overlap. There's no way to get around that in total. But, just to kind of wrap up today, I wanted to kind of look at your whole career here at George Washington University. I'll ask, the question that I think everyone asks, what, of all the things that you've been involved with, from buildings to students to faculty, everything else, what really stands out in your mind as your major legacy that you're leaving the university?

TRACHTENBERG: Well, I think, when I came, people in the city, and worse, at the university, believed we were Washington's second university. They felt that Georgetown was the premiere institution and that we were perhaps second, in any case sort of linked with American University and Catholic University and other local institutions of higher education. I believe that during the last twenty years, GW has stood up and that conventionally, if asked, people both on campus and off campus see us as a peer of Georgetown today, without taking anything away from the other institutions in town, which I think are well thought of, American and Catholic and whatever. But inevitably, when there's a group, some are thought to be stronger, more robust, more visible than others, and we are no longer number two. Now, I'd understand that these are subjective concepts. But what leaders provide institutions with is an idea. A vision. And to the extent that people

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commit themselves to that idea and that vision, they then can implement it. And I like to think that I was somewhat a value added in persuading the GW community and then beyond that, to ripple effect, Washington at large, into believing in the quality of the institution and its promise. And now we are moving to go further to implement more and more of that promise. So the point, David, is, I mean, there are a lot of tangible things you can point to, but it's that intangible thing that I think is the most elusive but also the most valuable.

ANDERSON: I agree with you. From my perspective, of the people I see, like yourself, obviously not on the same scale, but working across the board with academics and alumni and everyone else. And just people here in Washington. I think that's become a truism about GW, as far as GW, Georgetown or even GW period.

TRACHTENBERG: And we did it in some ways that are unique. For example, I had to push against the conventional wisdom at the time in order to get the university to agree to become the host of the National Security Archives. Nina Solarz, the wife of Stephen Solarz, congressman from New York, came to me and said the national security archives are located over at Brookings. They're about to be put out, because Brookings needs the space. Could you find a space available here? And we didn't have much space and we ultimately had to impose the national security archives on the library, and the then librarian was against it because, quite rightly, she wanted to treasure what limited space we had exclusively for GW.

And the then Vice President for Academic Affairs concurred with her, and I said, "look guys, I have a vision, and I'm going to overrule you in my capacity as president, because I have a vision, and that vision is that we add a resource to this campus which we ourselves could not buy, because we don't have the money, we could not create, because we don't have the staff. What we can do is provide these people with the space, at some sacrifice to ourselves, I grant you. But it makes GW a place that people come to. It makes us a location that scholars and journalists will seek out that we would not otherwise have. And we are not rich enough to be too poor to take this asset. And I think it's worked out splendidly. And they've been here, and they've been good hosts. We've been good hosts. They've been good guests. And they have really added value to GW's reputation and frankly, to our resources.

ANDERSON: Exactly. Was the divesting of a lot of the Ph.D. programs part of this overall, um, because that's one thing I've really noticed, several things I've obviously observed, but the fact that we had like forty Ph.D. programs.

TRACHTENBERG: Forty-eight.

ANDERSON: Yes, it was a huge number, anyway.

TRACHTENBERG: Yeah. Yeah. We had grown willy nilly, a little like Topsy. We had a lot of very mediocre Ph.d. programs and again, I said, we ought to have fewer, the better. And even now, I think we have too many. There are a whole variety of fields in which we are the natural place to have the preeminent Ph.D. program, Public Administration, Government, Political Science, things like that. But we are an unnatural place to have certain kinds of degrees, because we don't have the space and we don't have the facilities. We're just the wrong location. We have

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the wrong set of resources. So, again, I think the idea is to have Ph.D. programs that are outstanding and fewer of them.

ANDERSON: Also, on the academic side, the, I heard President Knapp in a presentation, actually at the Heritage Society meeting, over at the Four Seasons, I believe, made the statement that even in the economic recession, our applications were up by fifteen percent. Now, I give you credit for that as much as what he's done so far.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes of course. I mean, look, he's a great man, but in a year and a half, he hasn't yet had a chance to make his mark. And what he is the beneficiary of is the inertia, the forward inertia and reputation that I put into place with my team and Bob Chernak and Kathy Napper and others. But I of course need to, with all humility, to say I inherited from Lloyd Elliott, and Lloyd Elliott from his predecessors. We are all of us custodians, and we are in a chain that goes back to 1821 to Luther Rice. Each of us, a trustee of the institution during our brief period. And we all stand on each other's shoulders. I, yes, applications are up, particularly early admit. I am still, nevertheless concerned to see what happens in September, when the students have to show up. If the economy keeps getting softer and softer, we may lose more and more students. And we need, therefore, to hold in reserve, scholarship resources, so that we do not attrit fine students who may write to us and say, "look, I'd like to come, but I can't do it. My father lost his job." Or "I can't borrow the money. The bank isn't making loans." We need to be able to stand and assist those youngsters. So it's very important that we not inhale. The classics teachers, lessons about hubris, and hubris is followed by, as you know, nemesis.

ANDERSON: Right. Exactly. The three things that come to mind as far as, I won't call them failures, because things happen and time goes on and life goes on. Obviously, the graduation that we had a difficulty with the National Park Service.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes.

ANDERSON: The University Club, which never full worked out, and the GW Health Program, health care program. Now, all of these, to me, is as important as what one does with that as to worrying about the fact that this does or does not work out. Are there other things that you would like to have seen go differently, or . . .

TRACHTENBERG: Oh sure. Yes indeed. Look, I would have liked to have seen curricular changes that didn't happen. I would like to have seen calendar changes that didn't happen. And other ways of running the university more efficiently. Better use of institutional resources, better use of philanthropy. I would have liked to have seen our giving to the university by alumni and friends of the institution even more robust than it was. I would have liked to see us close on a couple of real estate transactions where we hesitated and we missed and will never be able to, you know, recover that. For example, when Marshall Coyne died, there was a building on Pennsylvania Avenue that he owned at the meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. And that building came up for sale, and Lou Katz and I talked about it and we hesitated a day or two too long. And the building sold before we had a chance to get it. I think we could have acquired that building. And if we had put our business school there, I think that would have put a brand on the business school, located on Pennsylvania Avenue, a Pennsylvania

avenue address, located at the juncture of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. That could have become, with time, an investment, the preeminent school of international business. We could have had adjunct faculty much more easily from the IMF and the World Bank. It could have become the place to go to for a certain kind of degree. Indeed, in its way, it could have become competitive with Harvard, with the best business schools in the world.

Again, if you define your mission narrowly, you can take on a goliath. The idea is for David to be flexible and swift with his slingshot. Well, we didn't acquire that building. A law firm acquired that building, and we ended up building a new, a wonderful new business school, the Duquès Building, on campus. I think it's terrific. But I believe that had we gotten that property on Pennsylvania Avenue, it would have been terrific plus. And so I regret, every time I drive past, I regret missing that opportunity. But you can drive yourself crazy that way. What you have to do is look at what you've done and say, look, nine times out of ten, we got it right. And that's a very good percentage. And life has its failures as well as its successes, its rough as well as its smooth. You also have to understand that you're going to fail. You're going to fall down. And you do that because you take risks. If you don't take risks, you're not going to get things done. But inevitably, the definition of risk is that there are times when you don't succeed. Otherwise, it wouldn't be risk. It would be guarantee.

ANDERSON: Exactly. I am, after review, well, from several factors, one, obviously from these oral interviews but also from my own personal experience, because when I arrived, Dr. Elliott was president and you came basically the end of my first year. The diversity of a president is almost mindboggling. When I look at academics and buildings on campus, development and fund raising, enrollment, faculty, health care and you know, city relationships, student life and everything, I mean, it's everything under the sun. I mean, how is your transition to a university professor? Is this a brave new world for you that you're really obviously appreciating at this point?

TRACHTENBERG: Absolutely, I mean, a little bit, you have to avoid getting the bends as it were. You're coming out from all this pressurized experience and suddenly there you are and you can create your day any way you want as opposed to having obligations to so many other people. And I have done that, and as you know, I have been involved in alternative activities of one sort or another, both work and volunteering and various good works organizations and I'm serving on the executive committee of the American Jewish Committee and I'm doing various things for the District of Columbia for the city and I'm teaching and I'm writing books and articles and lecturing. Even in the next couple of weeks, I'm giving the keynote address at the National Association of College and University Attorneys in New Orleans. And then I'm coming back and I'm giving the keynote address at the American Council on Education annual meeting here in Washington.

One of these days, my wife says, you've got to start acting your age. And she said, and you've got to start being a little bit retired. So she says, for example, you could take Fridays off. And instead of going to campus, come with me to museums and the theatre and see those movies you're always talking about going to. And put your feet up and read a book. And I think, you know, at some point, that probably will happen. I don't feel obliged to rush into that. But I see my friends, and some of them are slowing down a little bit, and I think a lot of these things are

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genetic, so some people age at a different rate than other people. Some of it's attitudinal. It's in your head. If you slow down, you slow down. I'm not in a hurry to slow down. But I know it will come. Just as it's natural that the night follows the day. And so one of the things that's going to happen, for example, is, in May, my son Ben's wife Joanna is going to have a baby. That will be my first and I hope not my last, and so I'm going to have a grandchild. And that's going to take time, and I'm going to, as the child develops, I'm going to want to spend time with the grandchildren. And so you become a grandfather, and that becomes a component of your life and it takes away from your next book or your next article or the next ambition you might have. That said, I continue to be ambitious. I continue to want to do something. I continue to want to add value. And I'm always looking for the opportunity to engage in interesting and I hope constructive things. I recognize the inevitability of biology but I plan to fight it as long as I can.

ANDERSON: Well, it's been my experience interviewing faculty members here that the individuals who continue to work often live the longest.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes.

ANDERSON: And even if they were retired and then worked on various things, or they just continued to work. Thelma Hunt comes to mind. I did a series of interviews with her, and she worked up to about three or four months before she died. She broke her hip. She was in her late eighties, I think at that point. The most amazing thing I encountered was I was going to do an interview with her, and she said, "David, I can't today, I'm on my way to the airport to do a consulting job in Seattle." And she was eighty years old. So . . .

TRACHTENBERG: Eighty is the new seventy.

ANDERSON: It is. It is. And all of the science articles now say that the life span will get longer and longer and longer. Like now they tell us, you know.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes, Yes. If I had known, I would have taken better care of myself.

ANDERSON: That's right. But still, I think things like the oral history interviews, your writing, your presentations, are very important, because one thing that I've often, I know this is getting into Rambo science fiction in some capacity, but about humankind, is that unlike the Vulcans and their mind melds in Star Trek Adventures, we don't have a way of passing on that thoroughness of knowledge and experience that we gather. So we obviously have to do it in alternative ways.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes. That's true.

ANDERSON: So I do hope you continue with your alternative methods of contributing that knowledge.

TRACHTENBERG: As long as it's fun. As long as it's fun. I mean, at some point, I know, you know, I will get older and I'll want to behave like an older person. But not yet.

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ANDERSON: Not yet. Is there anything that you'd like to, what we're going to do is, I'll take this interview and we'll have it all transcribed. I'll do some preliminary editing, and then I'll give you the entire mode, and I'll give you copies of all the uh . . .

TRACHTENBERG: Yes.

ANDERSON: I have everything digitally recorded except for the very first one, when I couldn't, when the recorder had not come in.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes.

ANDERSON: But, you can, I'll obviously give these to you, and then we can edit through that, and then you can decide as far as the deed of gift is concerned, because what I'd like to do is either put all or part, it doesn't have to be all, on the Encyclopedia, because I've found that the other oral interviews that we've put on the Encyclopedia, people read and they enjoy.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes. Yes. I'm increasingly inclined to just let it go. I mean, you know, let you do whatever you want with it that's useful and constructive. I don't think I have any special secrets here, and it's not as if I'm in the federal administration, where there are issues of state or something like that that need to be held back. So if there's somebody who is interested in these things, I want to make them available to them.

I have some thoughts about the current state of the university and directions it should be going, and I think I ought to keep those to myself, or at least if I share them with you, I don't mind. But those ought to be put aside, because I don't want to do anything in any way that instructs in any kind of public manner my successor. If he would want to talk to me off the record, I'd be glad to be helpful to him to the extent that I have a capacity to be. But I recognize that I'm a twentieth century man and he's been engaged to bring the university into the twenty-first century, and there may be ideas and notions that he's got about where the university ought to go that I would disagree with. Whether I'm right or wrong is immaterial. And we won't know for a decade in any case. Or longer. And moreover, so many other things are impacting on us over which we have no control.

So you said something before, for example, about the health plan. Well, we are not the single player in this. What was going on with the health plan has to be seen in the context of what was going on at all of the universities. All of the health plans, the nation, you know, President Clinton coming into office, Hillary Clinton, now Senator Clinton, Secretary Clinton, but during her period as first lady, trying to advance a health scheme for America. Had that gone through, that would have impacted on our health plan. It didn't go through, and that impacted on our health plan. And so we are not a feather in the wind of circumstance. But we are buffeted on all sides, and impacted by what's going on in the economy, what's going on in the world. Is there a war on? Is there a recession? And unless you'd see these things in their context, in their historical context, then they have no meaning.

ANDERSON: Right. I agree very much. I mean, it's not a matter of stakes. It's a matter of circumstance and even more importantly, as I stated before, it's basically what you do with the

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circumstance and how you treat that circumstance that really . . . you know, in the case of the health plan, the best decision was to, just to close down and that pursuit.

TRACHTENBERG: That's right. You can't do everything and sometimes the best thing to do is to simply stop doing that and devote yourself to something else. Look, to govern is to choose. To choose is to alienate. Inevitably, you make a decision and somebody thinks you did a great thing and somebody else thinks you did the wrong thing. And the best you can hope for is that you were thoughtful and sound and that you followed your own course. I sound a little bit like Philonius here.

ANDERSON: Well, I can say with a great deal of certainty that your overall history is, will be well received long into the future.

TRACHTENBERG: Well, thank you David. I am of course my own worse critic. And I know my shortcomings and I know my own anxieties and neuroses and my own feelings about I should have been kinder and gentler here. I should have been more firm here. I should have listened more to the faculty on this point. I should have ignored their advice more on this point. I should have been more aggressive here and more forceful there. I, you know, and every now and again I'll complain to my wife Francine about something. And she'll say, "and why didn't you fix that while you were president, Mr. wise guy?"

ANDERSON: Laughs.

TRACHTENBERG: So, you know, well, I didn't. So, some of these, you know, some of these things, you know, you get smart later. Monday morning quarterbacking doesn't get you anywhere. I had my chance. I had my run. I had two decades. I did what I could with it. I didn't bat a thousand, but I think I did well enough that I'm not at all embarrassed by the legacy that, I hate that word, it's so pretentious, but, by the record that I left behind. And I like to think that some of the successes that are being celebrated by my successor are there because of what I did. Look, you buy an apple, you buy an apple orchard. A few months later, apples appear on the tree. In addition to giving thanks to the lord, you have to give some credit to the person who nurtured the orchard before you bought it. Right? The tree didn't bear apples in three months because you bought the orchard. So, for example, we seem to be, even in these chaotic economic times, proceeding in a forward progressive stable manner. I am thrilled for that and quietly in my heart I say I obviously left the institution in a good economic situation with reserves in place, over two hundred and thirty million dollars in reserves, which are now being applied to help to steer us through these daunting economic times.

And so unlike many other universities, President Knapp is giving raises effective January and we are not laying people off and we are continuing to hire and we are continuing to give generous scholarships to incoming students, whereas a lot of other universities, Harvard included, are freezing raises and not hiring new faculty because they feel a pinch that we anticipated and sequestered resources against. I'm pleased as punch, and I think that President Knapp's successes and the university's successes reflect well on me, and I'm a great enthusiast for that and a cheerleader for the new administration. As I know he will be in his turn, you know, whenever he hands the torch on to his successor.

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ANDERSON: Well, I know we've spoken before about your tenure and career. It's kind of unusual to have a school where one president is here for thirty-two years and the next one for twenty-three and the next one for nineteen.

TRACHTENBERG: Absolutely. Absolutely. No no no. I mean, we are very rare in this. I mean, here we are, founded in 1821, and we've only had, what, sixteen presidents, something like that, whereas you get a lot of other places, they have a far longer number of presidents and a much more modest history. I think, by the way, that that's an important characteristic of the stability of the institution.

ANDERSON: Let me use this as a segue here. Just one final question. Obviously, leadership is very much a family affair. I know that Francine has had a tremendous amount of both input, encouragement, and everything else. Basically, do you feel like you'd be where you are now without that family support, so forth and so on? Because I think that's so important to have.

TRACHTENBERG: Oh, I think it's impossible, impossible to underestimate Francine's contribution to George Washington University, something for which she was never compensated and only modestly recognized. I wouldn't say that she was ignored, but it seemed to me, for example, that, and of course, it's not too late, that she should have been given a university medal or even an honorary doctorate. I was most grateful to receive one, but frankly, if they'd given it to her and not to me I think it would have been quite wonderful. She was always there for the university. There for students, there for faculty, answering the phones, hosting receptions, coming to events. And she did all this on top of being senior vice president at WETA, being president of the District of Columbia Jewish Community Center, raising two sons, looking after me. So, I mean, she played a major visible civic role in the city in addition to her work at the university. And is in my judgment, an institutional hero of sorts. And I'm sure that was true about Betty. I wasn't here, but I can only believe that she played her role and I'm sure that Mrs. Knapp will, Betty Elliot, yeh.

ANDERSON: Well, she does. She's with him at most events, and so forth.

TRACHTENBERG: Right. Right. And it's fun, you know too. It's work, it's work, of course. Now, as you know, there is more and more movement now to compensate, you know, presidential wives. Fran had a full-time job as an executive at the public television station and so compensation was never something that entered our minds. But you could imagine a canvas, maybe even GW, where the spouse is incapable of holding down a job. I think of, you know, these rural big universities in the Midwest or some place, where they're working at the university virtually full time and maybe some sort of cash compensation would make sense. But there's a lot of debate about that in higher education circles. And there's kind of a feminist perspective on it and a management perspective on it. So this isn't the place to resolve that issue. But there is a literature increasingly on the subject.

ANDERSON: I wasn't aware of that at all.

TRACHTENBERG: Yeh. Yeh.

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ANDERSON: Well, I'm hoping that by doing an interview with her, I don't think we'll do nine sessions, but we will certainly do enough to get her perspective in her own voice, which I think is very important. The interviews I've found over the, one thing that I've always found fascinating about, in an academic sense for oral history, is that, yes, people can read transcripts, but they can also listen to people, and I think that gives a dimension. It would be like just reading about Franklin Delano Roosevelt and never hearing him speak or ever hearing a fireside chat. To me that's the same difference, in that capacity.

TRACHTENBERG: Absolutely. Absolutely. Well, I mean, you know, golly, I've suddenly got my mind going, thinking to myself, wouldn't it be wonderful if we could listen to Abraham. I myself don't speak Aramaic, but I'd be willing to study it if I thought I could listen to Abraham. And to listen to Lincoln. When does it start? When do we start? I know there are recordings, obviously, of Franklin Roosevelt.

ANDERSON: Basically, with Edison, that was the earliest ones, in the 1880s, 1890s.

TRACHTENBERG: A lot of those are very scratchy sounding though.

ANDERSON: Oh, certainly, without a doubt. And, uh, but at least there were recordings and they used to have the two, the little cylinder recordings and they used to have what they called wire recordings, which they actually recorded on a little wire.

TRACHTENBERG: Yes. I've seen those.

ANDERSON: You don't have something to play it on, you're really up a creek in that respect.

TRACHTENBERG: But they can re-digit that.

ANDERSON: Of course, and they often do. But we're very fortunate in the fact that we can record things and it is also one of my ambitions to not only have you and then of course have Francine's, so that people can see that perspective. I think that's very important. But I'd also like to use some voice on the Encyclopedia, if I can work that out.

TRACHTENBERG: Sure. Yeh.

ANDERSON: Obviously, it won't be extensive, but it will be long enough for people to understand what people sounded like.

TRACHTENBERG: That's quite sound. I think that's very interesting. And even looked like. It's always interesting. You're always surprised sometimes when you see somebody who you let's say had a telephone relationship with. Now you meet them and they're taller or shorter. They're very different than what you anticipated.

ANDERSON: But the voice does make a real impact with, you know, it has the same effect, and one thing that I've tried to do personally as far as my academic side is concerned was to make

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what we presented or what we saved and what we lectured about more than just lectures. A personal experience with things that have greatly affected peoples' lives. And your work here, obviously the wellbeing of the university as a whole, but it also has affected numerous numerous peoples' lives, that they'll think about and even pass on to their children and grandchildren.

TRACHTENBERG: Well, one of the things I notice now, you know, I'm out of office a year and a half, the people who are most consistently embracing me, interestingly enough, are the maintenance personnel and the security officers who are always glad to see me and greet me and go out of their way to say hello and come over and ask me how things are going and that sort of thing. Professors, of course, although there's more turnover I think in that, and you know, if junior faculty coming in and more and more people don't have any idea who I am. It's probably a fine thing. And of course, the student body over three or four years will completely flush out and flush in. A whole tide will go out to sea and come back and people won't know, you know, won't know who I am. You know, it doesn't mean anything. I called one of the vice presidents the other day to ask him something and I got a secretary and she said he's not available right now. may I leave a message for him? And I said, absolutely. Will you please tell him that Steve Trachtenberg called. And she said, could you spell that sir?

ANDERSON: Laughs

TRACHTENBERG: And I thought, sic transit gloria.

ANDERSON: Time moves on, does it not?

TRACHTENBERG: Yes, it really does. Yeh.

ANDERSON: Well, thank you very much, President Trachtenberg, and I look forward to visiting your new home and speaking with Fran and a continued friendship, relationship with you.

TRACHTENBERG: Terrific. David, I certainly hope so. Give my best to Blanche. We're on the threshold. It's December 31st as you pointed out at the beginning of the session. We're on the threshold of a new year. Hard to believe that we're going to be in the ninth year of the twenty-first century. I myself having been born in the thirty-seventh year of the twentieth century. And I don't anticipate making it to the thirty-seventh year of the twenty-first, but I'm having a good time in the years I've got. So, I want to just keep making trouble and I hope that you and I will continue to play together and every now and again accidentally do something useful and good.

ANDERSON: Myself being born in forty-nine, I would often tell students that I was born in the first half of the last century. That seemed to impress them in some capacity.

TRACHTENBERG: Well, that's right. When I recollect things from World War II for students, they seem flummoxed by that. The truth is, so am I. (laughs)

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ANDERSON: Well, thank you again and I hope you have a great new year, and please give my regards to your family, and after, you know, things settle down a little bit in early January, I'll make my contacts and we can just go from there.

TRACHTENBERG: It sounds like we have a plan. And as for these materials, I'll try and figure out what it is I can get over to you.

ANDERSON: Well, I'll just, I'll tell them. If you would, I won't be able to tell them until I get back or I can call them.

TRACHTENBERG: No rush. No rush. When are you coming back?

ANDERSON: About a week. We leave January 2.

TRACHTENBERG: Oh, not a problem. Look, this stuff has been sitting here for a year. It will keep for months.

ANDERSON: I just want to, what I do is I, when the contacts are made and other people have also called me about things, I want to make sure they're aware of things, so that they're not blindsided by them.

TRACHTENBERG: What do they do with most of the stuff? Send it out to Maryland?

ANDERSON: Well, we have currently, now whether this continues on, I don't know, we have a room, we have two rooms down in the lower level of the Gelman Library. One is, one room, they have materials that are really odd sized or used quite a bit and aren't fully acceptable by WRLC, the consortium library, as you know. We have another room, we call the president's room, that basically has your materials and President Elliott's materials.

TRACHTENBERG: I see. Okay.

ANDERSON: So it's just, there are a couple of other little things in there, but not very much in excess of that.

TRACHTENBERG: Right. Well, I don't . . .

ANDERSON: And it's all wrapped and it's all listed, so people can . . .

TRACHTENBERG: Can find it if they . . .

ANDERSON: They can find it very easily if they need it.

TRACHTENBERG: Well, alright. Because what we have here are photographs with, actually, some of them are famous people and worth keeping for the future, not because I'm in them but because it shows a visit to the university by Dalai Lama or something like that, and it's worth keeping.

TRACHTENBERG: December 31, 2008

ANDERSON: What did you all finally decide to do? I went over and saw some of your personal materials that Francine showed me one time. I gave her some thoughts on that, but I don't know how she followed up on it.

TRACHTENBERG: I don't either. You'll check with her when you see her.

ANDERSON: There are some wonderful, as you obviously know, there's some wonderful correspondence and, talk about memory and legacy.

TRACHTENBERG: No no. That's right. It's it's . . .

ANDERSON: And value, for that matter.

TRACHTENBERG: Yeh. Yeh.

ANDERSON: So, it's a great combination.

TRACHTENBERG: Wonderful. Thank you.

ANDERSON: Thank you very much.

TRACHTENBERG: You bet.

ANDERSON: And I'll, you know, I'll be getting back with you in January with all of this good information.

TRACHTENBERG: David, wonderful.

ANDERSON: I'll let you get back. I'm sorry you missed your conference call.

TRACHTENBERG: That's alright. I'll catch up.

ANDERSON: Three or four minutes and I'll be out of your way.

TRACHTENBERG: Not a problem.

(End of interview)